



Town of Groton, Connecticut

Meeting Minutes

Town Council Committee of the Whole

45 Fort Hill Road
Groton, CT 06340-4394
Town Clerk 860-441-6640
Town Manager
860-441-6630

Mayor Heather Bond Somers, Councilors Dean G. Antipas, Bruce S. Flax, Bill Johnson, Frank O'Beirne, Jr., Deborah L. Peruzzotti, Rita M. Schmidt, James L. Streeter, and Harry A. Watson

Tuesday, May 15, 2012

6:00 PM

Town Hall Annex - Community Room 1

SPECIAL MEETING

1. CALL TO ORDER

Mayor Somers called the meeting to order at 6:05 p.m.

2. ROLL CALL

Members Present: Mayor Somers, Councilor Antipas, Councilor Flax, Councilor Johnson, Councilor O'Beirne, Jr., Councilor Peruzzotti, Councilor Streeter and Councilor Watson
Members Absent: Councilor Schmidt

Also present were Town Manager Mark Oefinger and Executive Assistant Nicki Bresnayan.

3. NEW BUSINESS

2012-0040

Town Council Goal Setting

Discussed

Councilors reviewed a list of potential goals developed at an earlier meeting.

Mayor Somers suggested focusing on three top goals: economic development, schools, and infrastructure. Councilor Watson agreed with those priorities. Councilor Johnson feels that energy conservation should be added.

In response to Councilor Peruzzotti, Town Manager Oefinger provided an update on RTM budget deliberations on certain items.

Councilor Streeter feels that the RTM is looking for the Town Council to start the referendum process on the road bond. With respect to schools, Councilor Streeter feels that the Town Council goals should include Phase II.

Councilor Flax feels that ranking is important and every Councilor should be involved with a goal. Councilor Watson feels that assigning goals makes people accountable. He suggested that the Council has already made progress on the education goal.

Councilor O'Beirne expressed concern with groups of Councilors working on goals together due to FOI issues. Mayor Somers noted that the Councilors associated with the goals were only assigned to refine the goals not be responsible for those goals. Goals should be discussed and agreed upon by the group, even if individual Councilors have more of an interest in one subject area or another.

Councilor Peruzzotti stated her top three goals are economic development, becoming a more environmentally conscious Town (although it could be difficult without a grant writer position), and infrastructure. She feels that communication with the Board of Education is not a goal, but a necessity.

Councilor Flax feels that it does not have to be a Town Council goal for Councilors to discuss the item, such as improving the relationship with the fire districts.

The consensus was to condense the goals to three measurable goals.

Councilor Peruzzotti suggested that if an item on the list is not made a goal, it should be referred to committee since all of them are important.

Town Manager Oefinger directed the Council to the list of questions that would be helpful to refine the goals.

Discussion turned to potential goal #1 - Develop a robust economic development strategy and marketing plan.

Discussion followed on economic development versus growing the Grand List and the Council's role in such a goal. Councilor Johnson suggested that the goal should be to take a proactive approach by working with the Economic Development Commission (EDC) and Planning and Development staff. Councilor Antipas feels the EDC is an idea-generating body, but they do not know if their ideas would be supported by the Council or not.

Mayor Somers feels that goals should be broad, with specific action items associated with them. For example, a goal would be to support economic development. Specific tasks would be providing direction to the EDC; establishing a Revenue Generation Task Force; and supporting the Town's Economic Development Coordinator.

Councilor O'Beirne suggested that the EDC meet periodically with the Town Council Economic Development Committee to identify the expectations of each group.

Discussion turned to potential goal #4 - Provide a diverse, consistent, quality education experience for the Town of Groton.

Streeter expressed support for this being a goal.

Mayor Somers offered to develop a list of broad goals and bulleted tasks for Councilors to review and mark up. She polled the Council on the potential goals. The consensus was that potential goals #3, #6, and #7 should be referrals rather than goals.

The Town Manager stated it would be good to wrap up goals soon so they can be included in the Adopted Budget. The Commission asked that this item be placed on the agenda for the May 22nd Committee of the Whole meeting.

4. ADJOURNMENT

A motion was made by Councilor Watson, seconded by Councilor Flax, to adjourn the meeting at 6:57 p.m.

The motion carried unanimously.